



3 Staff Tactics to Consider When Reopening Your Private Practice

By Stacey Oliver-Knappe, Owner The Customer Service Gurus

The problems we had in January 2020 running our businesses are the problems we wished we had now. I feel for you. As a small business owner myself, my entire business and client based changed within a few weeks.

However as we begin to slowly reopen as an HR professional, I have three tactics to consider as bring employees back to work. Hopefully, this moves you in a smart direction that works for your business, your employees, and your patients.

The target for this article is smaller private practices, especially ones without the benefit of an HR professional on your team. I will not venture in to the realm of safety and social distancing. That is better for the experts at the CDC.

What I would think about...

1. Who do I want to come back?

I have found small business owners do not spend enough time evaluating the talent on their team. Understandably, they are so busy running their business, they ignore their secret weapon – their staff. Unless it is a problem, most small business owners do not give too much thought about the strengths and weaknesses on their team. Life in this new world offers you time for this important reflection.

Make a grid. On the left side of the grid list all your employees' names. On the top make columns listing these phrases: Rate 1 to 5 how you enjoy this person in the office; How many years of experience; Does their role require specialized training (i.e. only they can do it); Rate 1 to 5 how well you think they will adapt to the new sanitizing procedures; Are they willing to do or learn more than their current job. That last question will help determine who will do whatever it takes to get you open and keep everyone safe.

Notice your emotional reactions and evaluate each person's technical skills. That will guide you who you want to pursue coming back first. Financially, you may need less staff. This exercise will help you make a smart decision who is your essential team.

Feel Free to Contact Me with Your Staff Development Questions. I am happy to help.

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2. Compensation and Personal Situations

Depending on your state and programs passed by the federal government, your former employees may be doing financial the same or even better than when they were employed with you.

If financially it is easier for them to stay unemployed, they may choose to do so. Do not be judgmental about this. It doesn't mean they won't ever return; it is a personal decision for a moment in time. That is all. However, if that is the case, consider a one-time Come Back Bonus or an hourly raise to make it advantageous to return to work.

Employees may have personal situations that make it impossible or difficult for them to return. Daycare may not be available. Elderly parents may need additional support with nursing homes being compromised. Consider offering flexible scheduling so employees take care of their family too. This would be radical, but maybe hire a babysitter for your staff to bring their children to work. There are details to be worked out in this scenario, but this is the time for innovation and working through what used to be red tape.

3. Bringing them Back to Work – Reboarding

The term 'reboarding' is now a hot topic in HR. When an employee begins with a company it is called onboarding. This term refers to bringing employees' back to work after an extended absence.

When you reboard your employees, be crystal clear what the sanitizing procedures and personal behavior expectations are in the office. Expect them to be disoriented, so make a list of To Do items to get the office open and running. This is either for them individually or as a team. Put it on a big public wipe board to give a feeling of accomplishment when tasks are complete. When I write onboarding programs, I stress to the client have a rough sketch what the new employee should do for the first two weeks. I suggest the same tactic here.

This is new territory. This I believe will work best, but adjust based on your situation.

If I can help further, please visit www.thecustomerservicegurus.com and click BOOK A CONSULT for a free phone conversation. I am happy talk over the phone, or send me an email at Stacey@thecustomerservicegurus.com.

Next time, I will talk about reboarding your patients.

We are all in this together. Please take care and stay safe.

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